

ENQUIRY

A Journal of Independent Radical Thought

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Editor's Note

We regret the delay in the appearance of this issue of **Enquiry**. The inroads of the selective service system among our contributors and Staff has seriously disorganized the routine of publication. We trust, however, that future numbers will be presented with a greater measure of regularity.

Mr. Kristol, who is Acting editor for this number, has previously written for **Enquiry** under the pen name of William Ferry.



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A RADICAL IN RETREAT

Louis Clair

Never was the meaning of words more abused than in our times. In a society that has ceased to revolve around certain fixed norms and concepts, a free for all has developed on the market for intellectual goods, in the catch as catch can of the demagogues. There is little value attached to the meaning of words and concepts, to clearcut definitions; it has become the habit to use words as a means to attract the public.

"Socialism" has become the most abused word. This, incidentally, is a proof of the power it has acquired in the collective consciousness. The right and the left, stalinism and fascism, have called themselves socialist. There is German National Socialism and French Radical Socialism and a hundred varieties in different countries.

Now Mr. Selznick has "redefined" socialism. According to him, socialism is a regime which requires the continued existence of a state apparatus and a ruling elite, the continuance of "limited" private property, the continuance of wage labor. In fact, according to Mr. Selznick, key sectors of our economy are already "socialized." "Structurally, the socialized sector of a socialist economy is not likely to be very different from the existing monopolistic sector, though of course a new personnel with a new policy will run it." There have been very different definitions of socialism given in the course of the history of the socialist movement, but every socialist of every shade of opinion would agree that the regime outlined above is definitely anti-socialist, is incompatible with socialism. Socialization of the means of production, abolition of the exploitation of man by man, self-determination of the people, have been among the cornerstones of socialist thought.

But, says Mr. Selznick, we have all so much in common; we agree on the necessity of revolution. He pretends that "there is little in the analysis which requires any serious modification of revolutionary strategy as we have known it up to now." Now this is a honey. Mr. Selznick has been among those who have stressed constantly the essential tie between means and ends in political activity, and rightly so. Now he suddenly tells us that, though ends have completely changed, the means have remained essentially the same. There is a very curious lag in Mr. Selznick's program, to be explained either as a failure

to think his ideas through to their logical end, or as a political move to enable him to maintain contact with the revolutionary movement. As a matter of fact, the other advocates of a "mixed economy"—John Chamberlain, Lewis Corey, and *tutti quanti*—are far more logical. They have realized that their ends are inconsistent with revolutionary means. Indeed, a social revolution, as history has shown us, has the disagreeable habit of not stopping where intellectuals desire, but of going on to a logical end. The masses once aroused to action will not stop when Mr. Selznick tells them to, and respect "limited private property" or the institutions of wage slavery. Revolutions are thorough-going. Revolutionary means, masses in action, are unsuited to the task of raising to power Selznick's ruling elite. Only in the decline of a revolution, in its Thermidorian period, can these elites come to power. The adequate means for Mr. Selznick's ends are not revolutions but counter-revolutions, or the gradual reformist means which his co-thinkers advocate. Only one type of revolution would be suited to Mr. Selznick's means, and that is the pitiable product of Mr. Laski's brain, a "revolution by consent."

There seemed to be an essential point of agreement between Mr. Selznick and many democratic socialists: both were perturbed about the growth of the totalitarian state, both were groping for checks and balances to prevent totalitarianism in the new society. But now we see that this was a misunderstanding. If two persons say the same thing, they do not necessarily mean the same thing. We try to discover ways and institutional means to avoid monolithism in the new socialist society within the framework of its own institutions. Mr. Selznick provides checks and balances for the new society by carrying over a great part of the old.¹ But this kind of "mixed economy" is not new to history. If there exists an approximately equal power of the two most important classes, if neither can upset the balance of power, then, in order for society to be able to function, a new third force must come to the fore: the state bureaucracy. Selznick's thesis boils down to the ideological foundations for a new bonapartism. Only a bureaucratic elite can hold the balance of power, it must rule "benevolently" and "in the interests of the people," it must be both "social" and "democratic"—shadows of Napoleon III.

¹ Many problems concerning the functioning of a democratic socialist society are still unsolved or only partially solved. A discussion among socialists on these questions is urgent and we would be glad to participate in it, but this cannot be accomplished within the scope of this article.

Are the ideas of a "mixed economy" really more than the expression of the mixed sentiments of disillusioned intellectuals who feel that events do not move rapidly enough into desired channels? What does a "mixed economy" really mean? It reminds one of Trotsky's defining Russia for fifteen years as a "transitional economy." Transition from what, to what? "Mixed economy"? Which sector determines the social pattern? If it is the "socialized sector," then, in fact, those who control state economy control society in exactly the same totalitarian way as if the whole economy were nationalized; if the private sector is dominant, then no solution is provided at all, and the productive forces still call for centralized coordination.

"Mixed economy" does not say anything about locus of power. Who holds power in Selznick's society? The masses are unable to rule, so the political elite rules. Since the masses are politically immature, they cannot effectively control: therefore, control as well is vested in the elite. Where does the ultimate check against the abuses of the bureaucracy lie? Since contending classes will continue to exist, holding the balance between one another, bureaucracy must really remain unchecked, the chief safeguard being its "benevolence."

We do not even want to go into the economic nonsense of this theory. "How, for example, will Selznick prevent," asked one disrespectful friend, "the poor farmers, performing unproductive labor, from leaving their private property and going into the nationalized collective farms?" Does Selznick want to continue the low standards of living of the poor farmers as a check for democracy? This "realistic" conception is either ten times more utopian than the most extraordinary dreams of socialists, or it will become an ideological cover for totalitarian rule.

A monolithic society is an undemocratic and oppressive society. But must every society without private property be an oppressive society? All anti-socialists, from the gentlemen of the National Association of Manufacturers to the renegade Eastman, have answered "yes," all socialists have answered "no." Mr. Selznick keeps bad company . . .

The argument finally boils down to the age-old controversy between cultural optimism and cultural pessimism. The forces of reaction, of conservatism, have always stressed the unchangeability of the human being: men are "sinners" or "profit makers" or "power seekers." Throughout the whole intellectual history

of the last three centuries this cleavage was very sharp: the progressive elements, insisting on the changeability of human nature, argued that inhuman conditions, not inherent weaknesses, make the "bad" character of man. Mr. Selznick, in spite of certain reservations, stands on the side of the conservatives. His pet idea is not Calvin's distinction between the chosen ones and those eternally doomed, neither does he agree with the Manchesterians that man eternally endeavors to make the greatest possible profit on the market. He is much more sophisticated. The new tune on the old record is "the relatively permanent and universal character" of the iron law of oligarchy, i. e., minorities will always rule and majorities will always be the object and not the subject of politics. This "iron law of oligarchy" is completely formal. Formal laws are valueless in philosophy or science; it is only when they are given content that they become meaningful. Under what historical conditions do minorities rule? Everything we know about primitive society indicates that there is a significant period in history in which there was no minority rule. But even if we assume that there have always been rulers and ruled, that is where analysis should start, not end. Were social conditions and relations between rulers and ruled the same in the post-revolutionary America and in Napoleon's France, were they equivalent in Soviet Russia and in the Third French Republic? What do the city republics of the middle ages have in common with modern centralized states? The concept is so empty that it does not even allow a fruitful hypothesis; endeavoring to be all-embracing, it has become meaningless. Power is being treated in a non-empirical, purely metaphysical way. The theory is not concerned with concrete power manifest here and there, but with power in itself, a far cry from the original scientific outbursts of Mr. Selznick. Against a concrete menace of bureaucratization, concrete measures of defense can be organized; but a general, undefined, eternal menace can only invite despair and inactivity, that is acquiescence to the powers that be, or will be. John Dewey throws a light on the foundation of the argument: "Current and social tendencies are read back into the structure of human nature, and are then used to explain the very things from which they are deduced." (*Freedom and Culture*, p. 108)

In fact, the whole concept was never meant to be used as a scientific instrument, but as a weapon against radical ideas, and it has been used as such as long as there has been a socialist movement. For Selznick too, the "iron law" serves primarily as

a political weapon. William Ferry, one of his co-thinkers, in the same issue of *Enquiry* lets the cat out of the bag: "Utopian political doctrines are to be deplored and not only because of their unattainability; in practice they will have worse effects than those more conservative and cautious..." "...the aim of democracy, defined as self-government by the people... today means strengthening the trend toward Bonapartism." It does this, say Selznick and Ferry, because men will always be dominated by minorities, and such doctrines can therefore only spread illusions. This is not, mind you, Eleanor Roosevelt, or Max Lerner, but the "revolutionary" editor of a radical magazine!

This is one of the most blatant defenses of reformism, of conservatism, I have ever come across. Men are bad, so let's choose the lesser evil. Let's be reasonable and "limit our goals." In fact, revolutionists are only serving Bonapartism. If these sentences had not been written, they could have easily been deduced from Ferry's and Selznick's assumption of the unchangeability of human nature. It really seems that no further proof is required as to the essential link between social conservatism and the pessimistic view of human nature.

Revolutionary socialists agree with Marx that man changes his own nature in the course of his history; they hold that, once the fetters of an inhuman society are removed, man can really develop his full nature; that only then human history will really begin. This cultural optimism is not to be confounded with Rousseau-ist naivete, though both represent the same trend of thought in a broader sense. A tremendous amount of scientific data, from the work of nearly all modern anthropologists to the empirical studies of sociologists as Max Weber, Sombart, Mannheim, and those of almost all modern historians, supports this theory. Hitler, Stalin and the bosses of every "machine" in the United States try to utilize the weaknesses and shortcomings of men for their proper aims. They have a fundamental contempt for the masses. Contempt for the masses as objects only for manipulation is the essential element of the "Bureaucratic Spirit."

Socialists believe in men, they are not blind to the meanness, the weakness and the inhumanity of many a worker. They do not idealize them, but they assert that in a society in which there is no longer the alienation of man from his work and fellows, in which the isolation of the individual and with it his hopeless struggle for recognition, for power, and for profit are overcome, a new human being can be born. We do not say that this will

happen automatically. We do not believe in inevitable developments. We hold that such a change in human nature will only be brought about if today men will group together and fight for these ideals, only if at least in some small fraction of society men already now act and think in terms of the new social ethics, in terms of comradeship and solidarity. While Mr. Selznick is primarily concerned with higher productivity and intellectual freedom—if not the freedom of the intellectuals—we stress the essential moral character of socialist aims and activity. Socialism is to us a way of life.

The inhumane state of the working class is the main reason for socialist attacks on the capitalist society. Selznick separates himself from socialists in that he claims that the cultural conditions of the workers and wage-labor will continue to exist, favoring only some more efficient and crisis-proof class society. The change in the condition of the working class can only be brought about in the course of a revolutionary process, that is, through the proper activity of the oppressed class. There can be no doubt that the European working class, for example, since Engels wrote his *Condition of the Working Class in England*, has achieved major cultural changes through its political activity.

Nothing is more unscientific than belief in a group of benevolent manipulators. It is the task of socialists to show to the masses, who will act spontaneously in the crisis of class society, the sense and direction of their action. Selznick's solution is either utopian or a more radical version of the new Deal. Certain intellectuals, despairing of the potential force of the working class, want to play a decisive historical role. But the only way in which they can do this is to become state-bureaucrats. If they choose this way they will lose the utopian humanitarian part of their program and will have to capitulate to the necessities of state-power.

There are no experiments in social science. Only action can test theories. The revolution of tomorrow will be the ultimate test of the theories of today.

While Selznick's theory can only stultify and break the will to action, while it is in its essence a conservative and reactionary theory, revolutionary Marxism remains the theoretical embodiment of the will to progressive action.

¹ This is excellently treated in Sebastian Franck's article "The Bureaucratic Spirit" in the Spring issue of *New Essays*.

MR. SELZNICK REPLIES

It is disappointing, but hardly unexpected, that the discussion initiated in the last issue of *Enquiry* should call forth so full a measure of misunderstanding as that which we observe in Mr. Clair's comments. Unfortunate, too, is the fact that Mr. Clair is patently out to "do a political job" against what he considers to be subversive and heretical ideas. Nevertheless, without attempting any defense of my personal politics, I shall indicate very briefly some of the major fallacies in Mr. Clair's discourse.

1. *Who is a socialist?* If one sets out to discuss fundamental issues, and if it is assumed to be a valid project to attempt a definition of socialism, then it is irrelevant to judge a new formulation on the basis of whether it conforms to an older one. This is the main burden of Clair's attack—but he is not altogether fair. He gives no hint of a positive definition of socialism embodied in the article he criticizes. Let me repeat that here (see page 7 of the July, 1943 *Enquiry*): "There are three major points which can serve as a rough definition of socialism: 1) a shift in social power (which can only come in a revolutionary way and not piecemeal) from the banker-oligopolist class which controls the major sector of industry to the organizations of the working class, which form the primary social base for a socialist government; 2) the mobilization by the state of the key sector of our economy (heavy and mass-production industry) for production for use-in-consumption by the people; 3) the maintenance of an equitable distribution of income for the provision of continuous mass purchasing power. This is what is essential for the elimination of the basic evils of monopoly capitalism—war and unemployment and the promise of fascism—and for establishing the foundations for the unprecedented development of a welfare economy."

It is *this* set of objectives which requires a social revolution, which places me in a very different political milieu from that of John Chamberlain, and which requires the persistence of revolutionary working class strategy under capitalism. I also believe that this program requires a state apparatus and that this necessity will probably lead to the creation of a new class structure, with the consequent political urgency that the class struggle be continued. I do not happen to believe, for reasons already explored, that it makes much *political* sense to talk about socialism as a "way of life"; though socialism certainly

has its moral ideals, these ideals are concerned with *popular* welfare and *social* orientation, and do not legislate (although they delimit and condition) the ethical imagination of the individual. Nor am I influenced by the pulpiteering eloquence which holds forth fulsome promises of the "abolition of exploitation," or which glibly repeats the formulae of popular self-determination when it is precisely the meaning of democracy, and the grounds for its endurance, which has raised such complex and difficult problems. Yet for all of that, I doubt that there are many among my comrades in the Socialist Party who would be ready to read me out of the movement. The wellsprings of American socialism today are too diverse to permit the Marxist tradition, however powerful, to exercise a monopoly.

2. *The mixed economy*: Again giving his readers no inkling of the context in which the term is used, or of the specific qualifications suggested, we find Mr. Clair shocked that a socialist should propose the continued existence of a sector of private property in the means of production. He is particularly distressed over the plight of the poor farmers who will wish to rush into collective farms. Now my discussion began from the assumption that it is necessary to talk about socialism as a living possibility, having to do with conditions as they are likely to exist within the next generation or two. I would not, of course, draw rigid lines for a future economy, but when we consider what those sectors independent of the state-controlled economy are likely to be, then surely the prospect of an independent agriculture comes readily to mind. The fact is that there will probably be, for a long time to come, several million families who will want to engage in farming on the traditional family basis. I am for encouraging this tendency, and with most socialists support that work of Farm Security Administration which has had to do with a tenant-purchase program, education and technological research. That is of course a far cry from *forcing* any one to be a farmer. (It may be added that the idea that collective farming acts or would act in any sense as an ideal for small farmers is a gratuitous assumption which has no foundation in fact. Nor is there any evidence that collective farming—which presumably is different from corporate farming—is the most efficient method of agricultural production.)

But I am afraid that the real point here may be missed: I am concerned primarily that there be *some* economic groupings which are independent of that dominant sector of the econ-

omy which must be state-controlled. We may assume that there will always be some tendencies of this sort which are worthwhile in themselves and can be encouraged from the point of view of democracy. Clair's weakness lies in the fact that he is unconcerned about this necessity. It should be unnecessary for me to repeat that the locus of power in a mixed economy must lie in its socialist sector, and that the main weapon in keeping that sector subject to popular control will be the class struggle, carried on through independent workingclass organization.

3. *The law of oligarchy*: Mr. Clair believes that the thesis I have stated concerning "the inability of masses to control the tools of organized action, the consequent tendency in all organizations toward the development of bureaucratic classes, the persistent fact of rule by minorities, and the struggle of minorities for control of the mass," is "completely formal." This, were it valid, would be a significant objection, for there are indeed many statements made which are devoid of content and have only an ideological significance. But luckily there are some rather simple tests which we may use in appraising the scientific significance of any generalization. We may inquire, firstly, whether it is possible to state the conditions under which the generalization would be false. And we may also demand that the generalization be useful in the pursuit of new knowledge. Our theory easily fulfills both conditions: a) Among other situations, the theory breaks down when techniques are developed, such as that of conscious opposition, which negate the dependence of individuals and groups upon one another. Such situations have often occurred, but the the dominant tide is all the other way. b) The law of oligarchy, besides generating numerous specific hypotheses, has led us to the powerful political principle that power alone can be relied upon to check power. Mr. Clair refuses to recognize the universal character of the law of oligarchy, preferring to believe that specific historical conditions are decisive. *It is precisely this blindness which leaves him cold to the necessity for group conflict in a socialized democracy and for the existence of diverse and opposing economic and political forces.* It is idle to think that a theory which makes for such programmatic differences is "empty" and "formal."

The fact is that Mr. Clair is a prisoner of his Marxist dogma. To his mind, all social laws are historical in the sense of being relative to a given social system. Others, however, will understand that the very fact of group life and purposive or-

ganization can and does produce general phenomena which persist independently of the special form of economic organization which happens to prevail. (It may be pointed out that Marxist theory does recognize a type of generalization which is deemed to apply to many varying social orders, while ignoring the ensuing contradiction within its system. The theory of "historical materialism," for instance, is judged to relevant to any analysis of feudalism, classical society, etc.; similarly with the concepts of "ideology," "class struggle," etc. Apparently, Mr. Clair's "methodological" objection is nothing more than a dressed-up aversion to facing the facts of social organization.)

4. *Values and Politics*: I stand accused of "cultural pessimism" and am lumped indiscriminately with all those who, for whatever reason, have emphasized the limitations of human capacities.

In common with almost all western progressives today, I derive my political values concerning democracy and the need for man to control his social environment from a cultural heritage of which the American and French Revolutions remain enduring symbols. When I think of what *ought to be* I think of all the great libertarian hopes celebrated and sustained by the mass upheavals of the last two centuries. But it is ABC in the prerequisites of intelligence to distinguish sharply and clearly between what *is* and what *ought to be*. (This is emphasized by what we know today of the evil consequences of being unprepared for the gap between hopes and reality. It is not only a matter of creating illusions: the real danger lies in the fact that events demand answers, and any organization will be forced to take that path dictated by expediency if it has not prepared itself along lines that will be helpful when propaganda alone will no longer suffice.) In attempting to find political principles that will aid us in the embodiment of democratic values in social life, we are faced with the necessity of *taking into account* the facts about human life which exist today and are likely to persist in the period which confronts us.

Consider a socialist convention. Many comrades often feel that at best everything should be peaceful and harmonious, at worst all struggles should take place wholly on the convention floor, and that certainly factions and caucuses are evil. The more experienced understand, however, that factions cannot be avoided, they must be taken into account, made legal and responsible, and thus transformed into a technique of democracy. The

values of our anti-faction comrades are good, and indeed probably identical with the values of those who are pro-faction, but they have not learned to distinguish between *political principles*, which link values with existing conditions, and the values themselves.¹ Mr. Clair has fallen prey to this same naive fallacy. I am indeed for the fullest possible extension of democracy. But that isn't what makes me a socialist, since many others share the same values. Special political principles define the socialist approach—which will be sharpened, I hope, by the recognition of the need to rely on techniques of struggle tangential to the institutions of self-government, at the same time as the latter are pushed to the highest possible level of development.

To Mr. Clair's potpourri of amalgam I can only say: it is to be hoped that you and others will begin to discuss the pressing specific problems that riddle the socialist movement: problems of workers' control in a planned economy, decentralism and bureaucracy, the future of parliamentary institutions. The problems are real, and the gratuitous label "reactionary" will never solve them for you; still less will it dismay those who continue to condemn capitalism and all its bitter fruits.

¹ An illustration which might further clarify this point is the attitude of the armed forces toward venereal disease. The military authorities *value* continence as the answer to this problem. But, being forced to take into account the way men *do* behave, they *rely* upon contraceptives and prophylactics and publicize their proper use, incorporating that education into the structure of their organization.

SOCIALIST PACIFISM

David Dellinger

One of the most pressing problems facing the contemporary revolutionary forces is whether or not we have any chance of effecting a successful revolution until we embrace the method of non-violence. Henry Ozanne's article, *Pacifism and Revolution*, does not contribute to an understanding of this problem. It is too confused and unscientific to be of much assistance to persons who may be fired with revolutionary passion and want a serious discussion of the merits and demerits of non-violence.

1. The first half of his article purports "to show that religion as such—in the name of which are found the greatest number of pacifists—is inadequate theoretical ground for either non-violence or revolution."

What is the meaning of "religion as such"? To lump all kinds of religion into one abstract concept, "religion as such," is as unscientific as the National Association of Manufacturers' gathering all forms of opposition to Big Business into one straw man, "socialism as such."

Furthermore, if there is some value in analyzing "religion as such" as a "theoretical ground for either non-violence or revolution," it would be more logical to start with some specific theoretical principles that seem to be central in the philosophy of at least a large body of religions. Such principles might well be those which always supply an urge toward understanding and brotherhood between all peoples, and through the struggle towards a truly cooperative oneness, the belief in an ever-deepening perception of the universal forces, or God.

An analysis of the possible non-violent and revolutionary implications of such principles provide a "theoretical ground" that is far more significant than Ozanne's series of anti-pacifist quotations from a long line of bishops whom none of us had ever suspected of being revolutionists.

2. Ozanne himself proves my point. He states: "Organized religion always has been the relentless antagonist of the religious pacifists . . . the church as an institution is thoroughly oriented to the war culture and to the principle of violence." The obvious conclusion to draw is that religious pacifism cannot be evaluated as a revolutionary force by the absence of revolutionary sentiments in the institutional church. But instead of drawing this obvious conclusion, Ozanne goes on to a glaring non-sequitor:

"religion as such—in the name of which are found the greatest number of pacifists—is inadequate theoretical ground for either non-violence or revolution." How confused and stupid we pacifist revolutionaries must be to "found" our positions in the name of our "eternal, relentless antagonist."

Ozanne has unwittingly descended to the tactic of those who condemn revolutionary socialism by identifying it with the abuses of German National Socialism, the bloody dictatorship of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics or the boot-licking "socialism" of the British Labor Party. As a matter of fact, we know that the revolutionary socialist movement does have important lessons to learn from the experiments and failures of these counter-revolutionary "socialist" forces. It must root out those tendencies (e. g., to violence, chauvinism, and reliance on a small, self-perpetuating professional leadership) that National Socialism and Russian Communism have embodied in their full corruption. In the same way, pacifists should be reminded by Ozanne's article of the necessity for freeing themselves more completely from the bourgeois psychology and mannerisms of the status-quo, pro-war church. For all practical purposes this includes freeing themselves from the mores of the linear descendents of the one-time "Peace Churches." But this is no basis for argument against pacifism.

3. Ozanne's brief attempt at direct analysis of the religious pacifist movement raises some valuable questions, but it never fully escapes from his initial confusion. He reveals this when he concludes the analysis with this explanation: " I make these extended remarks on religious pacifism because religious pacifism is the only type of pacifism recognized under the Selective Service Law, and hence is the only legal pacifism in this war period."

By what new insight do we expect to find the revolutionary forces of pacifism amongst those rearward forces who find favor with the government? Obviously we must look, for the most part, to the more than 2000 pacifists who are in jail because they did not receive special favors from the government—or were too revolutionary to accept them. The non-violent revolutionary movement that is beginning to develop in this country will stem to a great extent from them and their counterparts who are still at large. They are the ones who will unite with the large numbers of soldiers who are learning, in the ghastly experience

of war, both the necessity for revolutionary change, and the impossibility of achieving it through violence.

There are more important things to do in this article than to present a comprehensive picture of the various stages of development amongst these potentially revolutionary pacifist forces. Let us recognise that they are still in an adolescent stage, that as yet they have not crystallized organizationally, and that they still suffer from their early associations with the organized church and its various offshoots.

Let us also recognize that they are maturing rapidly, and that it is unfortunate that they are receiving so little assistance from the historic socialist movement.

Finally, let us notice that already they include self-conscious revolutionary forces that do not fall into the sentimentalist errors for which pacifists are often rightly condemned. Two quotations from recent pacifist literature will give examples of developing revolutionary emphases:

1. "The People's Peace Now Committee is not for any 'peace' or armistice that would appease facism or strengthen imperialism and capitalism. A negotiated 'Peace by Consent,' now or later, will be a mockery if in any country, including the United States, it leaves unchallenged the privileges and power of the present ruling classes and their leaders. We are a committee of working men and women. Our purpose is . . . to arouse the common people against both war and totalitarianism and to help them forge other methods of struggle for a world free from tyranny and exploitation. It is the common people who sacrifice, fight and die; it is the common people who suffer most from the injustice of our present society; and it is the common people who, united, have the power to stop the war and build a world of brotherhood."

The second is from a statement, written for agitational purposes, by an 18 year old pacifist, when he refused to register under the Selective Service Act:

2. "I believe war is wrong because it is caused by an evil economic system which, by its very nature, it cannot change... So long as we continue an economic system in which the few exploit the many; in which investors exploit persons in foreign places whom they never see; in which distribution is so unjust that food is burned while babies starve; in which, because of crowded home conditions, children are denied that love which softens them and makes them truly love their neighbors; in which there is . . . a class struggle, and mutual hatreds exist and grow—so long will there be war."

Having recognised that there are both reactionary and revolutionary groups within the pacifist movement, let us refer briefly to three pacifist principles that are badly needed by the contemporary revolutionary movement.

1. One of the most revolutionary implications of a pacifist philosophy is the attitude expressed in court by the pacifist cited in Ozanne's article. He said: "I ask no one to stop fighting so long as he conscientiously believes that is the correct way." Ozanne interprets this as a disavowal of revolutionary implications and confuses it with the attitude of a few moral isolationists who, according to him, emphasize that "their sole concern is their own unwillingness to participate personally in war." This is ridiculous: The corollary of "I ask no one to stop fighting so long as he conscientiously believes that is the correct way" is, "I ask everyone to stop fighting as soon as he conscientiously believes that fighting is not the correct way." This has tremendous implications.

The defeat of capitalism and all tyranny will be assured as soon as men act only in accord with conscience, and stop compromising with the state, public opinion, economic security, or political expediency.

Deeds are always more important than words. One of the most debilitating factors within the socialist movement is the fact that, time and again, socialists fight in capitalist wars, work in capitalist jobs, live in non-workingclass neighborhoods, and descend to capitalistic methods of violence, dishonesty and class hatred.

War is a crisis in the death-struggle of the capitalist state. One of its functions is to manoeuvre the thoughts, energies, and pent-up rebelliousness of the people away from a revolutionary destruction of the upperclass state into a futile combat with the potentially revolutionary forces of other countries. With but few exceptions, the non-pacifist socialist allows himself to be inducted into the army and thereby upholds the reactionary state in its hour of greatest need. This is by no means an inevitable corollary of non-pacifist socialism but it is a tragic tendency actuated by failure to recognize two truths which are not limited to pacifism but find their fullest, most logical expression in pacifism:

a) The revolutionary spirit of liberty, equality and brotherhood must be applied with equal loyalty in every area of life,

individual as well as social, with respect to methods as well as goals.

b) For both movements and individuals it is as important to practice our ideals today as it is to hold them up as goals for tomorrow.

By and large, contemporary socialist forces are victims of a psychology of opportunism that leads them to compromise their ideals in a way that undermines the leadership they should be offering to the masses. Pacifism emphasizes a religious faith that leads people to defy the state on basic issues, even when the odds may appear to be hopeless. This is the spirit that crystallizes issues and inspires courage in the masses.

2. The great need of the revolutionary movement today is for a spirit of attack. Where Lenin spoke of expropriation of the state, the socialist movement today has a tendency to snipe away at little evils, trying to defend civil liberties, to abolish Jim Crow within the Army, to reform the tax system, and to gain a few members from the labor movement. Our theoretical articles do not have the ring of battle in them. Almost it is as if our various activities were carried on for the purpose of securing our own salvation, by being "active" socialists. We must shift from defense to offense, from reformism to revolution, from self-expressionism to struggle for goals that we desire passionately, and expect to attain. We must outgrow our preoccupation with parliamentary procedures.

There will surely be a shift in these directions growing out of the present period of ferment. As soon as this shift takes place, desirable as it is, it will bring great dangers.

a) An aggressive, extra-parliamentary group can easily impose its mistakes as well as its truths upon a changing society. This tendency is increased, to the extent that it relies on moral force. A non-violent movement can be aggressive through use of such weapons as strikes, legal and extra-legal picketing, non-cooperation, and the boycott. But, in so far as these are not supplemented by violence, they rely to a great extent on being able to win the cooperation of all potential strikers, the support of public opinion, and a minimum of legal interference, through the clear rightness of its demands. By contrast, a group utilizing goons, bribery and intimidation may win victory, not because its cause is just but because of the efficiency of its racketeers.

The extreme example of the power of non-violence is the

hunger strike. If ten political prisoners announce a joint fast until certain demands are met, tremendous cumulative pressure is exerted upon the government if their demands are reasonable. The government would place itself in great jeopardy if it allowed them to die voluntarily in behalf of a just cause. A non-violent attack on oppression can generate terrific power by the willingness of the attackers to accept suffering for themselves and by their insistence on minimizing the sufferings of others. But the minute the demands are unreasonable or selfish, the strikers become stupid exhibitionists.

b) In a revolutionary period, the pent-up energies of oppressed groups tend to explode in rioting, chaotic violence, and blind hatred. Contrary to popular misconception, a mature non-violent movement does not cease its revolutionary activities when the covert violence of our society breaks out into the open. But by its disciplined concentration on the goals to be achieved, and by its spirit of forgiveness and universal love, it helps to rationalize the mob spirit, reduce the violence to a minimum, and prevent it from diverting the revolutionary dynamic into useless channels.

3. In actual practice society has, except for brief periods, only a small group of self-conscious revolutionaries. The masses, including most of the supposed-to-be revolutionary, working proletariat, and most of the much-discussed middle classes, are uncertain factors, capable of throwing their weight in support of either side. The long-run success or failure of revolution depends to a great extent on the success with which each of the contending groups is able to win "public opinion." No strategic coups or violent victories can endure for long against an overwhelming public sentiment. Certainly a revolution is not a revolution if it merely shifts the external organization of society without inspiring the people with the will to brotherhood and with a faith in its present practicability.

Up till now we have underestimated the sincere and partially justified opposition of the masses to the non-revolutionary methods of the would-be revolutionary forces. We have confused and antagonized these potential allies—the people for whom we labor—by the physical and spiritual violence of our methods. Inevitably the sordid realities of our present actions have seemed more real to them than the idealistic goals for which we have claimed to be working.

We need to convince them not so much of the correctness of our ideological analysis as of the idealism of our cause. As a matter of fact ideologies appeal primarily to small groups of intellectuals. They have little meaning to workers, exhausted from long hours of work and distracted by the gaudy escapes of our civilization. Our greatest ally is the longing of all men for brotherhood and love. A non-violent movement so exemplifies this force, that men are won over to it. Where they will not make sacrifices for it, they will not be persuaded to fight against it.

Only the clear uncompromising action of non-violent revolutionists can win the masses over from their fears and their indifference.

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JOHN DEWEY'S GERMAN PHILOSOPHY AND POLITICS

Jim Cork

This book was first published in 1915. Then, Dewey, a supporter of the first world war, and not uninfluenced by the theory of German war guilt, attempted to show how the power politics of the German State flowed out of the specific character of German philosophy. The book has now been reissued during the second world war and has been brought up to date by Dewey in an addition to the original text of an introductory chapter on Hitler's National Socialism. This purports to prove the continuity of political principle and practice from the Second to the Third Reich, and, consequently, the molding influence upon Nazi practices of German classical philosophy.

Dewey starts his analysis with the statement that "the chief mark of distinctly German civilization is the combination of self-conscious idealism with unsurpassed technical efficiency and organization in the various fields of action." The basic roots of this dualism, Dewey maintains, are to be found in the ideas of Kant, with whose philosophy Dewey begins his argument:

"Kant's decisive contribution is the idea of a dual legislation of reason which marks off two distinct realms—one of science, the other that of morals. Each of these two realms has its own final and authoritative constitution: On the one hand there is the world of sense, the world of phenomena in space and time in which science is at home; on the other hand is the supersensible, the noumenal world, of moral duty and moral freedom." It is Kant's conception of the moral law as superior to nature and above reason, with the latter necessarily subordinated to the demands of morality, which in turn receives its supreme validation only from the "inner spirit,"—which Dewey finds has bedeviled all future German philosophy. The broad and amorphous character of this "inner spirit of moral duty" has allowed all the vagaries of mysticism and absolutism which characterized future German philosophy to be developed in its name. Through Fichte and Hegel (especially the latter) German philosophy concretized Kant's "inner spirit" with the doctrines of the primacy of the will over reason; the uniqueness of the German spirit, nation, and people; and the absolute power of

¹ G. P. Putnam's Sons, N. Y., 1942.

the state. From Hegel's conception that the state "is the absolute reality, and the individual himself has objective truth, existence and morality only in his capacity as a member of it"—with its consequent depreciation of the individual—to Hitler's conception of the "Volkische Society" with its emphasis upon German-ness and blood, is only a small and logical step. This in brief and very compressed form is the heart of Dewey's analysis, which of course is fortified by his characteristically close reasoning and a wealth of quotations.

Though Dewey makes out an interesting case which exhibits generally a shrewd flexibility in relating the history of ideas to the development of political and social practice and contains many rich insights into the fantastically bizarre character of German idealistic philosophy, nevertheless the performance as a whole is disappointing and the book itself can, I think, be considered Dewey's most unfortunate single venture. Let me indicate briefly the grounds for my assertion.

In the first place, the "proof" of his main thesis rests upon an extreme oversimplification of the data at hand. It is difficult to determine exactly the amount and kind of influence that the academic philosophers had upon German state practices. Many questions rise to mind immediately. Which of the currents—thought or action—is more seminal? Which is qualitatively anterior, which reflective? Is the influence one way, or mutual?—direct or indirect? These questions, admittedly easy to raise, involve, nevertheless, genuine methodological problems for a study of this sort, problems which for the most part Dewey has brushed aside in rather cavalier fashion.

Secondly, only a discriminatory neglect of basic aspects of the thought structures reared by Kant and Hegel can make either of them a clear ideologue of the future might of a German state, or even more crassly an ideologic ancestor of Nazism. Dewey is quite cognizant of Kant's cosmopolitanism, of the latter's loyalty to the ideals of the Enlightenment, of his favoring a federation of republican states as consonant with universal reason, but certainly weights these facts insufficiently in subsequent analysis. And though it is undoubtedly true that Hegel's principle of eternal change got stymied in chronological time, and his paean to absolute reason became frozen in the Prussian state (with the "rational" becoming the existing rather than the "real" of a just and humane philosophy), it is just as true that other aspects of Hegel's thought strained beyond the narrow

confines of nationalism. His universalism, his organicism, his stressing of the active nature of thought has influenced many movements and men (Dewey included) in the direction of extreme individualism rather than in the worship of the central state. It is certainly a significant commentary on the ease with which Dewey connotes Hegel as a direct progenitor of National Socialism that the chief ideologues of the Third Reich condemn Hegel's philosophy as the very antithesis of the Nazi spirit. Alfred Rosenberg, in his *Der Mythos des 20 Jahrhunderts*, says: "As a consequence of the French Revolution, a doctrine of power alien to our blood arose. It reached its apogee with Hegel, and was then in a new falsification taken over by Marx." Franz Böhm's *Anti-Cartesianismus* which offers a Nationalist Socialist interpretation of the history of philosophy says: "For a century Hegel's universalistic conception buried the motivations of the German history in philosophy." Hans Heyse, another Nazi ideologist, declares in *Idee und Existenz* that "Hegel is the source of all liberal, idealistic as well as materialistic philosophies of history." Carl Schmitt, one of National Socialism's most important political theorists, summarizes the matter by saying, "On the day of Hitler's ascent to power, Hegel so to speak died."

In the third place, Dewey neglects those non-Germanic currents of thought which helped to mold the theoretical conceptions of the Second and the Third Reich and thus their consequent political practices. Certainly Houston Stewart Chamberlain and Gobineau made greater contribution to the Nordic, German-blood myths of Nazism than Hegel. The neglect of these extra-Germanic influences, and the passing over by Dewey of the substantial features which the German state of the late 19th and early 20th century had in common with other imperialist states because *all* were grounded in similar economic and political compulsives precipitate the impression of the existence of something inherently and exclusively Germanic in thought processes and social action—which is disquieting in a humanist of Dewey's calibre.

All European states produced theoretical doctrines consonant with imperialist practices. Even Hegel's most extreme formulation of the authority of the central state can be quite easily matched by the English neo-idealist school of the late

¹ This, and subsequent quotations, are taken from H. Marcuse: "Reason and Revolution: Hegel and the Rise of Social Theory", last chapter.

19th century. T. H. Green, for instance, in his *Lectures on the Principles of Political Obligation*, says: "The state is based on an ideal principle of its own, and the common good, which the state embodies and guards, cannot result from the free play of individual interests. There are no individual rights separate and apart from the universal right represented by the state." Quite similar sentiments were uttered by Bosanquet in his *Philosophical Theory of the State* and by others of the same school.

The extreme severity of Dewey's judgment of the anti-democratic tendencies in the history of German politics and culture gets its moral impetus from his own positive credo penned at the end of his new introductory chapter:

"It is immensely clearer than it has ever been before that the democratic way of life commits us to unceasing efforts to break down the walls of unequal opportunity, of color, race, sect and nationality which estrange human beings from one another."

Unfortunately his oversimplification of a complex problem, his reading too much into Kant, his neglect of other aspects of Kant's and Hegel's thought, his passing over of the extra-Germanic influences, and his underestimation of the humanistic strain in German philosophy and German culture generally, has prevented an intellectual realization of his thesis consonant with the praiseworthiness of his own humanist motivation.